

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Lyon Street School

other names/site number Peru District School No. 4

2. Location

street & number Intersection of Rock Road and Lyons Road

city or town Peru

state New York code NY county Clinton code 019 zip code 12972

	not for publication
X	vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide X local

Lester A. Purpant DBHPO 3/19/13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain):

John Edison H. Beall 5.22.13
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Lyon Street School
Name of Property

Clinton County, New York
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

☐ private
☒ public - Local
☐ public - State
☐ public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	district
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant: Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone
walls: Wood
roof: Corrugated metal
other: Glass, brick

Lyon Street School
Name of Property

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County and State

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Lyon Street School is located at the south side of the intersection of Lyons and Rock Roads in the town of Peru, Clinton County, New York. The building is located on a 100' x 68' level parcel surrounded by open farm land. The building, which measures 24' x 34' in plan, is oriented towards the north, facing the intersection. It is a rectangular, gable front, single story, light wood frame edifice.

Narrative Description

Peru is a town in southern Clinton County, located on the west shore of Lake Champlain in northern New York. Within the town lie the village of Peru and the hamlets of Valcour and Peaseleeveville. The Lyon Street School is located in the Valcour section of the town. Situated in the Champlain Valley, along the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, the terrain consists of extensive farmland and low lying mountains. The town is sparsely populated with the primary concentration of inhabitants residing around the village. Rock Road runs east-west; Lyons Road meets it to form a "T" intersection, approximately one mile west of New York Route 9. The Lyon Street School is located on Rock Road, directly facing its intersection with Lyons Road.

The school is of light wood frame construction and is clad with wood clapboard siding attached with wire nails; the siding shows signs of weathering and age-related wear. The foundation is random laid field stone which is in fair condition, except along the west side, where it is failing; this condition has led to the sill sagging. The sill also appears to be compromised under the entrance, where a poured slab of concrete nearly abuts the building, likely allowing water to collect between the slab and the foundation.

The gabled roof with overhanging eaves is covered with corrugated metal which is rusted throughout and buckling in areas. The metal was laid over the remnants of an earlier wood shingle roof. An open, hip-roofed belfry sits on the ridge at the northern end; the bell is accounted for but not presently on site. An exterior brick chimney extends past the roof ridge at the center of the southern wall. The only doorway is a single opening centered on the front façade. The six-horizontal-panel door has a transom light over it, and there is a round window in the gable field that has been boarded over. All openings are framed by flat trim which was also employed under the cornice and on the corner boards. A bank of windows is centered on each side elevation of the building, directly under the eaves. Each bank consists of five windows; the three central units are square-shaped and have nine-pane fixed sash, while the outer windows are full size and are fitted with nine-over-nine double hung sash. The two lower sash on the east elevation have been damaged and replaced by larger sash which is ill fitting. A small coal hatch, now in very poor condition, is located on the west elevation, north of the windows and approximately five feet off the ground.

The interior of the school is largely given over to one large room, the classroom. Upon entering the building from the north facade, there is a small, roughly finished room to the right. This room was used to store coal for the stove and corresponds with the hatch on the west elevation. The wood planking in this area reveals circular saw marks, while the framing members have what appear to be reciprocating saw marks. To the left is a finished wall that makes up one side of a cloak room, which is accessed from the classroom. Continuing through the hall there is another framed entry that opens into the classroom. The walls and ceiling of the classroom and cloak room are finished in bead-board which has been painted over and partially stripped in areas. On the walls it runs vertically up to a chair rail that encircles the room at the height of the bottom of the larger windows; above that it runs horizontally. The window casings are formed of grooved millwork, with rosettes in the corners. At the south end of the classroom there are two voids, presumably where blackboards once hung. Centered on that wall is a patched area which is likely where the pipe for the stove exited to the chimney beyond. The floors are narrow tongue-and-groove wood boards, approximately 2-3" wide.

Prolonged deferred maintenance has resulted in problems common to an older building. However, other than general wear, and the aforementioned foundation concerns, there do not appear to be any issues that would compromise the structural integrity of the building.

Lyon Street School
Name of Property

Clinton County, New York
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master; or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1880-1938

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the nominated building, ca. 1880- 1938, begins with the construction of the building (which is not firmly established in records) and terminates with the building's closure as an educational facility.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Lyon Street School, located in Peru, Clinton County, is locally significant under Criterion C as a largely intact example of latter nineteenth century one-room rural schoolhouse design. The building is additionally significant, under Criterion A, for its association with Peru's district school system, which continued to function into the 1930s. The school represents an era in which education was administered on the rural district model, predicated on the use of multiple small schools spread out over a district. When centralization swept the country in the early 20th century, marking an important change in educational standards, hundreds of schools of this type were no longer necessary. The Lyon Street School offers itself as a characteristic, albeit late, example of the one-room school house type common in rural areas during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Few changes have occurred since the school was put out of active educational service in 1938, ensuring the retention of many original and important character-defining details. The building survives largely as built with a high degree of physical integrity, and exhibits many features associated with this distinctive building type.

Narrative Statement of Significance

At the start of the 20th century there were over 200,000 one-room schools nationwide. Of those, it is likely that fewer than 10,000 presently remain. While some have been restored, many others exist in varying states of decay or alteration. The Lyon Street School is fortunately among those that remain largely intact and is a representative example of part of New York and American history that is rapidly fading.

On April 6, 1848 a parcel of land just shy of one acre in size was sold by William Kirby to the Trustees of School District Number 4 for \$15. The deed shows that the purpose of this purchase was the construction of a school house. The 1869 Beers map of Clinton County identifies Peru as being divided at that date into 18 school districts and 4 joint districts, those being areas that overlap into a neighboring town. Within each district was a centrally located school house; the District 4 school is depicted as located at the intersection of Rock Road and Lyons Road, the location of the nominated Lyon Street School, though it would seem, based on physical characteristics, that an earlier structure predated the existing building. References to the school do not begin to appear in local papers until 1881, and continued until the early 1940s, with no mention of new construction during that time span. Therefore, a construction date of ca. 1880 has been assigned, which is consistent with the building's construction methods and existing finish features.

An interview with a former student, Mr. Arnold Wells of Peru, was useful in providing details about day-to-day events. Mr. Wells, born circa 1922, attended Lyon Street School for approximately seven years, from 1929 to 1936. Mr. Wells stated that the school originally ran to 8th grade, but that by the time he entered, it only went to 7th, and that there were generally about 12 students enrolled in total (this number was considerably higher in earlier years, as a 1901-1902 roster lists the names of 35 pupils.) He recalls two of his teachers, Mrs. O'Rourke and Ms. Josephine Lyons, and that boys sat on the left, girls on the right. As a student Mr. Wells was also the "custodian," meaning he was responsible for coming in early to start the fire and, on occasion, ring the bell. His experience corresponds with testimonies of students of one-room schools nationwide, an experience that was changed with district consolidation.

In the 1930s the Peru Central School District consolidated, bringing all students, K-12, to a newly built school complex near downtown, and gradually the individual district schools were put out of service. Modern transportation in the form of school busses enabled children to travel a greater distance to get to and from school, instead of being limited by a distance they could cover on foot, in the district model. This, combined with ideas about education reform, meant that small, rural schools had become obsolete. The last class passed through Lyon Street School in 1938, led by teacher Mr. Donald Ledwith. On September 9, 1939 Central School District No. 1 of the Towns of Peru, Ausable, Saranac, Schuyler Falls and Block Brook, disposed of the nominated building, selling it to Frederick W. Lyons. Frederick Lyons's family lived just across the road from the school, and many members of his family attended classes there. The Lyons used the school for storage, mostly hay, and made no significant changes. The building remained in the Lyons family for the next 73 years until Allen and Marian Lyons Dixon gifted it to the Town of Peru.

From an architectural perspective, the Lyon Street School is typical of many rural school houses, which were inexpensively built by local labor and with local materials without professional guidance from an architect. Many design elements present in the nominated building follow established mandates and suggestions first outlined by Henry Barnard, an educator whose 1838 book, *School Architecture*, helped formalize many ideas about this building type.

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These features include the high ceiling, which allowed for better air circulation; and windows on only two sides, though not on the north wall nor behind the teacher, raised several feet above the floor to allow for maximum natural light and placed so as not be in line with the children's view, to avoid distraction. The height of the windows also allowed for wall space at eye level, which could be used instead for pictures and teaching implements. The arrangement of the windows, as bands instead of individual units, marks this as a later example informed by reform initiatives. Though most of these concepts probably did not come directly from Barnard's book by the time the Lyon Street School was built, it was clear that his ideas permeated America's view of what a school should look like and how it should function.

Lyon Street School
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Gulliford, Andrew. *America's Country Schools*. The Preservation Press, Washington, DC. 1984

Interview with Allen and Marian Dixon of Peru, NY on June 1, 2012

Interview with Arnold Wells of Peru, NY on June 5, 2012

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .16 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 18 622248 4940433
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

The parcel is rectangular in shape and measures 68' x100,' the former dimension corresponding with the northern boundary aligned along Rock Road. The boundary is shown on two maps entitled "Lyon Street School, Town of Peru, Clinton Co., NY." These maps are drawn at 1:24,000 and 1:4,000 scale.

Boundary Justification

All of the land contained within the boundary is historically associated with the building during the cited period of significance, ca. 1880-1938.

Lyon Street School
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Arena
organization Adirondack Architectural Heritage date _____
street & number 1745 Main Street telephone 518-834-9328
city or town Keeseville state NY zip code 12944
e-mail susan@aarch.org

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Photographs by Susan Arena, AARCH, May 2012, TIFF format

0001 Exterior, view looking south showing east and north elevations
0002 Exterior, view looking to southeast showing north and west elevations
0003 Interior, view of classroom, east wall, looking towards entrance vestibule
0004 Interior, view of classroom showing east and south walls

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

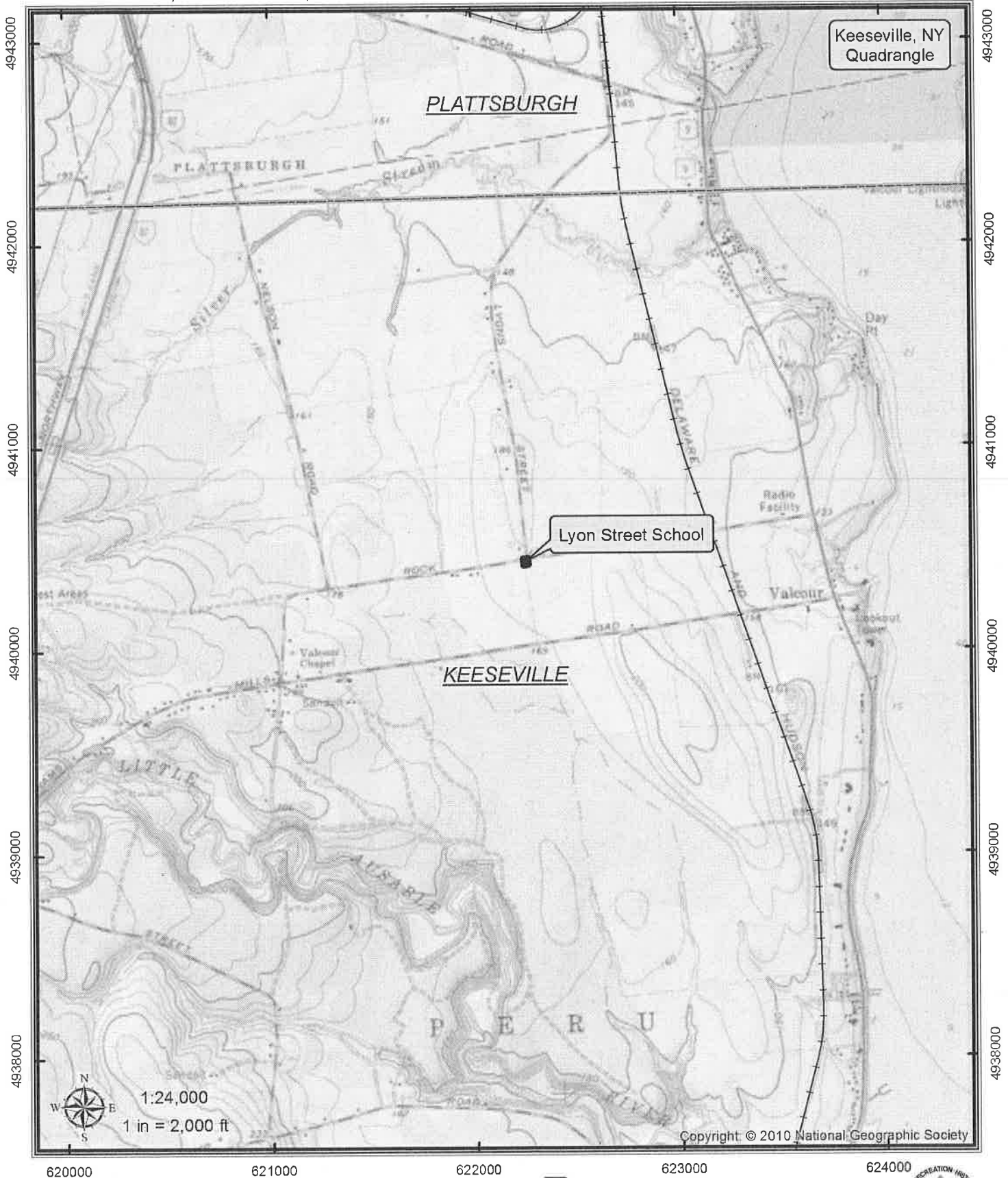
name Town of Peru
street & number 3036 Main Street telephone 518-643-2745
city or town Peru state NY zip code 12972

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Lyon Street School
Town of Peru, Clinton Co., NY

Rock Road (No #)
Peru, NY 12972



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 750 1,500 3,000 Feet



Lyon Street School

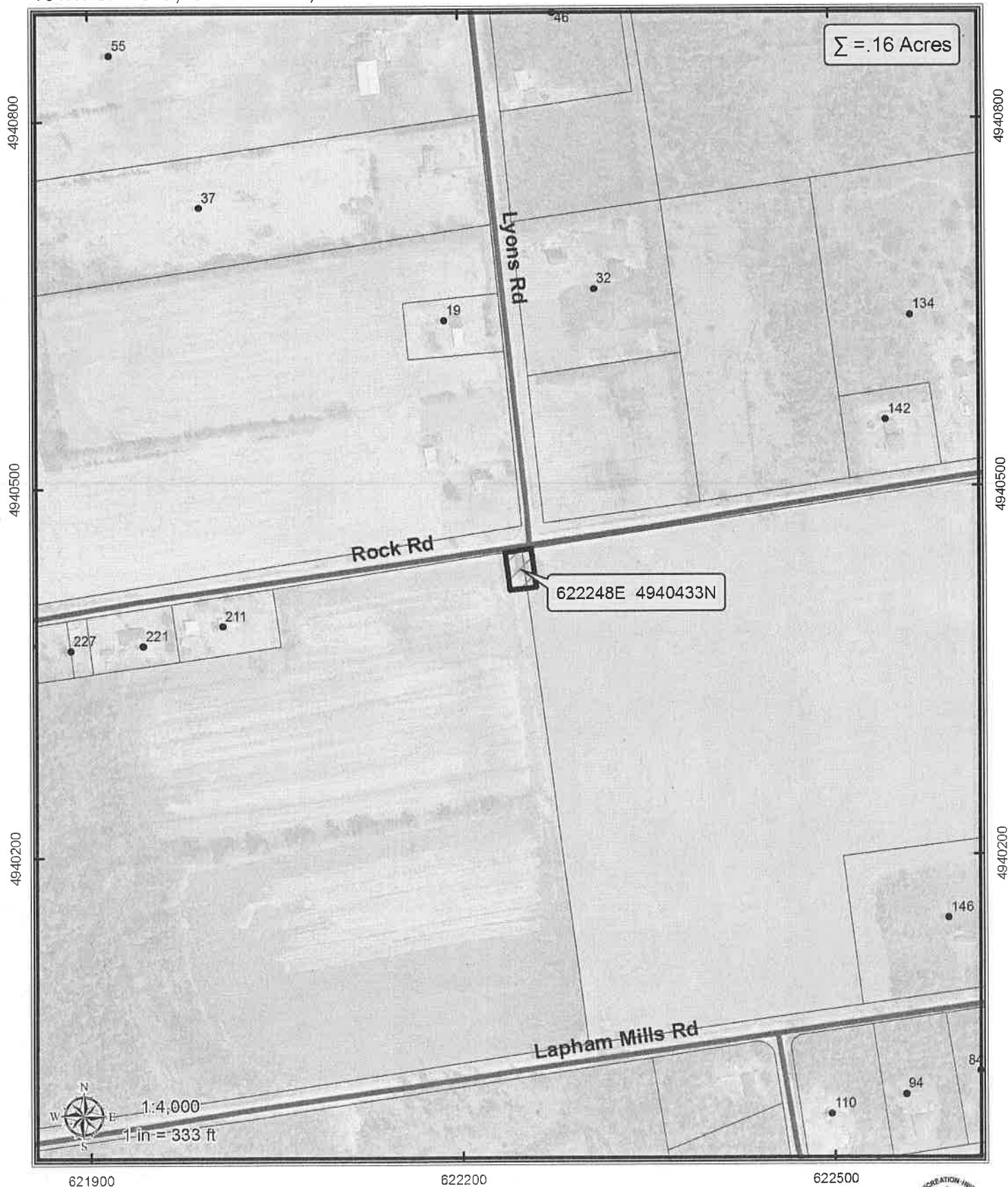
USGS Quad Index

Tax Parcel Data:
Clinton Co. RPS
<http://clinton.sdgny.com>



Lyon Street School
Town of Peru, Clinton Co., NY

Rock Road (No #)
Peru, NY 12972



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 125 250 500 Feet

 Lyon Street School

Tax Parcel Data:
Clinton Co. RPS
<http://clinton.sdgny.com>









